

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MILAN 01609 061730Z

43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 A-01 OPR-01 SY-04 USIA-06 EB-04

SCCT-01 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 PRS-01 PA-01 FBO-02 SAJ-01

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FM AMCONSUL MILAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3810

INFO USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS IT

SUBJECT: ATTACK ON MILAN TRADE CENTER

1. AT APPROXIMATELY 22:30 ON NOVEMBER 5 A GROUP STILL BEING SOUGHT BY POLICE THREW THREE MOLOTOV COCKTAILS INTO MTC AND BROKE ABOUT SIX WINDOWS. FIRE DAMAGE LIMITED TO COMMERCIAL OFFICER PETER FROST'S OFFICE THANKS TO PROMPT RESPONSE OF FIRE DEPARTMENT.

2. NO PERSONNEL AT MTC DURING ATTACK; CONSEQUENTLY NO ONE INJURED.

3. CONSULATE AND MTC HAD BEEN ALERTED BY POLICE TO DANGER OF INCIDENT AND BEEN ON ALERT ALL DAY BUT UNFORTUNATELY POLICE PATROL HAD PASSED JUST PRIOR TO ATTACK.

4. POLICE ASSUME ATTACK WAS MADE BY FACTION THAT FIRE BOMBED OTHER US FACILITIES IN ROME DURING SECRETARY KISSINGER'S VISIT. WHILE POLICE HAVE ONE FAIR LEAD AND I HAVE URGED SERIOUS EFFORT TO CATCH ATTACKERS, LIKELIHOOD OF THEIR APPREHENSION IS SMALL.

5. THIS IS FIRST ATTACK ON HIGHLY VULNERABLE MTC DURING ITS 10 YEARS EXISTENCE. POST SOMEWHAT APPREHENSIVE THAT EASY TARGET FOR FUTURE ANTI-AMERICAN DEMONSTRATIONS MAY HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED.

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PAGE 02 MILAN 01609 061730Z

6. POST HAS REPEATEDLY REQUESTED POLICE PROTECTION AT MTC AS RESULT OF SERIES OF DAY-TIME THEFTS OF EXHIBITORS VALUABLES FROM AUTOMOBILES PARKET NEAR MTC. POLICE RESPONSE HAS UNFORTUNATELY BEEN ABOUT WHAT ONE MIGHT EXPECT IN A BIG CITY WITH ITS DAILY BUDGET OF STREET CRIME.

7. PROTECTION AGAINST VIOLENCE HAS IN PAST BEEN SUFFICIENT AND PROVIDED BY POLICE EITHER AT OUR REQUEST OR UPON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE.

8. POST HAS HAD CLOSE CONTACT WITH PREFECT AND POLICE AND ON OCTOBER 15 REQUESTED RE-INSTITUTION OF POLICE GUARD AT USIS AND TC AS DANGER OF ATTACK ON US FACILITIES INCREASED. CONSULATE PROPER, WHICH IS REGULAR TARGET FOR DEMONSTRATIONS, IS WELL-PROTECTED. POLICE HAVE PROVIDED SPECIAL DETAIL DURING PUBLIC EVENTS AT BOTH USIS AND TC WHEN REQUESTED BUT HAVE PLEADED INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO PROVIDE ROUND-THE-CLOCK PROTECTION AT OTHER TIMES. INCREASED DEMANDS ON POLICE PROVOKED BY KIDNAPPINGS, STREET CRIME AND RISING VIOLENCE OF EXTREME LEFT AND RIGHT HAS STRAINED POLICE RESOURCES BADLY. PROBLEM AGGRAVATED NOV 5 BY DAY-LONG DEMONSTRATIONS FORCING POLICE TO POST GUARDS AT MOST PROBABLE TARGETS - POLITICAL PARTY OFFICES, CONSULATES, USIS AND OTHER LIKELY EXTREMIST OBJECTIVES. CONSEQUENTLY, TC PATROLLED ONLY BY ROVING POLICE PROWL CAR, WHICH, UNFORTUNATELY, OUT-OF-SIGHT AT MOMENT OF ATTACK.

9. I PROMPTLY SPOKE TO VICE PREFECT (PREFECT ABSENT FROM MILAN TODAY) AND TO POLICE TO PROTEST INADEQUATE PROTECTION AT TRADE CENTER AND TO STRESS IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING AMERICAN BUSINESS FACILITIES THROUGHOUT LOMBARDY. I WARNED THAT ATTACKS ON OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE US FACILITIES CREATING PSYCHOLOGICAL CLIMATE HIGHLY DISCOURAGING TO AMERICAN INVESTMENT IN ITALY WITH INEVITABLE ADVERSE IMPACT UPON ITALIAN ECONOMY. PREFECT EXPECTED BACK NOV 7 AND I HAVE REQUESTED IMMEDIATE APPOINTMENT TO DISCUSS PROBLEM IN GREATER DETAIL WITH OBJECTIVE OF RAISING PRIORITY ACCORDED PROTECTION US PROPERTY IN LOMBARDY.FINA

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